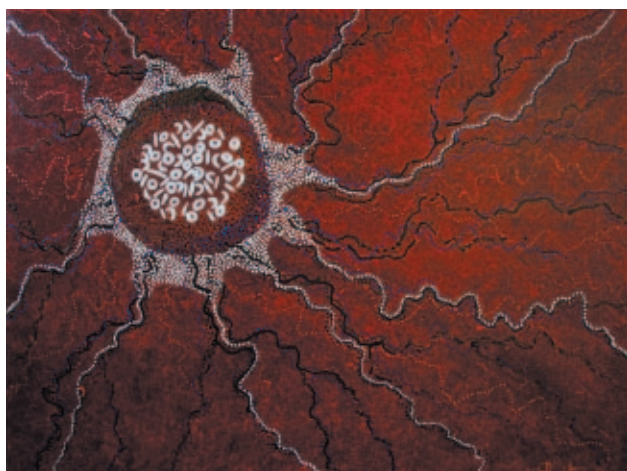


UnitingCare Queensland
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN **2014-2017**

Unified, positive and healthy





“We walk together”, by Robert Barton was commissioned by UnitingCare Queensland to celebrate the launch of our first Reconciliation Action Plan. It details the many different paths that have been taken on UnitingCare Queensland’s reconciliation journey. The dotted features of blue, green and white lines contrasted against the deep red ochre background symbolises the complex weave of people, stories and histories coming together through the shared vision of reconciliation.

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Terminology

Throughout the Reconciliation Action Plan the term ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ is used as the primary term with the occasionally used term ‘First Peoples’. For the purpose of this document both terms will refer to Indigenous Australians, Murri, Koori, Country, kinship, mobs, group names and other preferred identities. We acknowledge that no one term is preferred by everyone in the wider community.

Our vision for reconciliation

To be culturally responsible and committed to social justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We will be unified, positive and healthy.

This vision for reconciliation aligns with the mission of UnitingCare Queensland:

UnitingCare Queensland claims its place in the mission of God through its health and community services, research, advocacy and community development.

As part of The Uniting Church, the mission of UnitingCare Queensland is to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities as we: reach out to people in need; speak out for fairness and justice; care with compassion, innovation and wisdom.

Blue Care, UnitingCare Community, and UnitingCare Health are vital expressions of this mission.



NB: The use of the word “healthy” in our vision comes from the World Health Organisation definition as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

Message from the CEO

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land and pay my respects to all Elders, past, present and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples around Australia.

This is UnitingCare Queensland's second Reconciliation Action Plan and I am very pleased with the progress we have been able to achieve over the last few years. In our first report to Reconciliation Australia last April we advised that all actions had been delivered and now with our second action plan, we have the opportunity to commit publicly to more actions that will continue to make a difference.

In the past year we have had the opportunity to expand the services we provide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and at the same time have increased our Indigenous workforce. This occurred when five Indigenous services in Townsville, Cairns, Cape York and Thursday Island joined our organisation. The services include residential aged care and drug and alcohol rehabilitation, and employ approximately 120 Indigenous staff.

Additionally Blue Care has assumed full responsibility for a large number of aged care

services in the Northern Territory, further expanding our support to older Indigenous people.

It is also heartening to witness the partnership that has been nurtured with local Indigenous people in the building of the new St Stephen's Hospital in Hervey Bay.

We are committed to providing person-centred care in a way that meets the needs and preferences of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, residents and patients. We also provide tools and resources which support increasing Indigenous employment throughout UnitingCare Queensland. These are key elements in our Reconciliation Action Plan.

As a nation we all need to work together to help achieve equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in terms of life expectancy, health, education, employment, and opportunity. This Reconciliation Action Plan is just one way that UnitingCare Queensland can, through our staff and volunteers, contribute to achieving this goal.

Anne Cross

Chief Executive Officer, UnitingCare Queensland



Our Values

UnitingCare Queensland believes that values are fundamental to the work we do and express the mission of God by being present in people's lives to offer hope, healing and transformation.

The core values of UnitingCare Queensland are:

Compassion	Through our understanding and empathy for others we bring holistic care, hope and inspiration
Respect	We accept and honour diversity, uniqueness and the contribution of others
Justice	We commit to focusing on the needs of the people we serve and to work for a fair, just and sustainable society
Working Together	We value and appreciate the richness of individual contributions, partnerships and teamwork
Leading through learning	Our culture encourages innovation and supports learning

The core values guiding this Reconciliation Action Plan are:

Self determination	It is essential for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to decide how best to move into the future
Equality	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be heard and influential within the workplace
Relationships	Healthy relationships are central to building cooperative partnerships based on trust and respect
Respect	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are Australia's First Peoples. To have this reality acknowledged and accepted is at the heart of respect

Our Work

UnitingCare Queensland is the health and community service provider of the Uniting Church and supports more than 14 000 people throughout Queensland every day of the year. UnitingCare Queensland's mission is to reach out to people in need, speak out for fairness and justice and care with compassion, innovation and wisdom.

With over 16 000 staff and 9 000 volunteers in more than 400 locations across Queensland, UnitingCare Queensland is one of Australia's largest non-profit health and community services providers.

UnitingCare Queensland delivers quality and compassionate care through a network of health and community service groups including UnitingCare Community, UnitingCare Health and Blue Care.

UnitingCare Community works with 2 700 staff and 6 000 volunteers to deliver a diverse range of services. These include, Lifeline services such as 24-hour telephone crisis support, suicide intervention and community recovery, as well as family

relationships and mediation, counselling, domestic violence support, disability support, out of home care, intensive family support, social inclusion support and prison ministry.

UnitingCare Health is a large provider of health care services in Queensland operating approximately 1 000 licensed hospital beds across the state. Through its 3 800 staff, UnitingCare Health provide professional and compassionate person-centred care to just over 109 000 patients each year at The Wesley and St Andrew's War Memorial Hospitals in Brisbane, The Sunshine Coast Private Hospital in Buderim and St Stephen's Hospital in Maryborough and Hervey Bay.

Blue Care employs close to 9 000 staff, who provided 3 190 000 occasions of residential and community care for older people across the year. Its services operate in 260 centres and in 80 communities throughout Queensland and Northern New South Wales.



Case study

Adrian connects
with family – digitally



For Adrian, an Aboriginal man from Normanton, in Queensland's Gulf country, the news that his elder sister had died was shattering but the realisation that he would be unable to attend her funeral to say his last farewells made his loss even more devastating.

A resident at Shalom - Blue Care's Indigenous residential aged care service in Townsville - for the past three years, Adrian requires weekly kidney dialysis treatment to keep him alive. Due to the remoteness of his home country and the difficulty of finding transport to get him back in Townsville in time for his life-saving treatment, there was no way he could attend the funeral.

"I was very sad that I couldn't go because my sister was like a second mother to me," Adrian said.

Residential Service Manager at Shalom, Elizabeth Tillbrook was deeply affected by Adrian's distress and tried all avenues to try and get him to the funeral and back in time for his dialysis appointment.

Determined to find a solution to help Adrian, Elizabeth decided to try and set up a Skype session on a laptop computer so that Adrian could see the funeral and talk to his family whom he hadn't seen for three years.

"With the help of the Blue Care IT team who pulled out all stops, we managed to set up a Skype connection between Adrian and one of the people at the funeral. We were able to make Adrian comfortable and gave him the privacy to take part in the service for his sister," Elizabeth said.

When the Skype connection was switched on Adrian could hardly believe his eyes as he could see so many familiar faces looking back at him.

"Well the truth is I couldn't talk for a while then I said to all the people looking at me 'Can you see me?' and they said 'Yeah,' and I thought, 'What - two little wires and you can see all that, I didn't think it would be possible,'" he said.

"Then the funeral service started so I just sat there and listened and watched and I felt like I was really there."

"It was very kind of Elizabeth to organise it and I really appreciate what she did for me. It meant a lot to me to be able to see my sister's funeral and to be able to talk to all the family and friends at the service," Adrian said.

Our reconciliation journey

At the beginning of 2011 UnitingCare Queensland celebrated its commitment to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Just one year later on 9 February 2012, the organisation launched its first RAP at kuril dhagun, at the State Library of Queensland. The plan emerged from a year-long series of workshops held under the guidance of an external facilitator and attended by staff across the organisation who are passionate about reconciliation, including more than 40 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

UnitingCare Queensland's first RAP focused on building the foundation for reconciliation, improving the cultural knowledge of executives and staff members and demonstrating respect through adopting cultural protocols which recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The UnitingCare Queensland Advisory Group on Reconciliation (AGR) drives, monitors and reports on the implementation of the RAP. Staff from across the organisation are represented on the AGR. The significant RAP initiatives achieved in 2012-2013 include:

- implementing cultural awareness training and induction for new staff

- adopting cultural protocols for conducting Acknowledgements and Welcome to Country for all informal and formal events
- conducting executives and staff visits to Country
- supporting staff to attend NAIDOC week activities and hosting a UnitingCare Queensland booth at Musgrave Park during these celebrations
- developing a cultural capability checklist to improve service delivery
- ensuring marketing materials are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

During the life of this RAP, UnitingCare Queensland increased efforts to attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. Currently 2.3 per cent of UnitingCare Queensland staff have identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people which is just below the proportion of Indigenous people in the Australian population, at 2.5 per cent.



Developing RAP II 2014-2017

In June 2013, UnitingCare Queensland's Advisory Group on Reconciliation initiated a process to develop RAP II – 2014-2017.

The process began with discussions with key staff within our service groups. The ideas from these discussions formed the basis of a draft document, which was refined through further internal consultation and workshops. Reconciliation Australia was also consulted at key stages of development.

RAP II was endorsed by UnitingCare Queensland's Executive Leadership Team in March 2014 and the UnitingCare Queensland Board the following month.

The UnitingCare Queensland Reconciliation Action Plan 2014-2017 was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia as an Innovate RAP. This type of RAP builds on existing initiatives and introduces or pilots new approaches to building relationships, showing respect and improving opportunities.

RAP II will commence 1 July 2014 and will be current until 30 June 2017.





Case study

Bush medicine

HERVEY Bay's Butchulla people have helped grow a "seed of an idea" into what will be a magnificent Medicinal Garden linking the traditional to the modern ways of healing at the new St Stephen's Hospital .

The Medicinal Garden at the UnitingCare Health Hospital will be a place for the local community to reflect and learn about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, through a rich variety of native plants and herbs used in traditional healing methods. The garden will also include edible plants.

Michelle Clunn, Quality and Community Relations Manager for St Stephen's Hervey Bay and Maryborough, says the success of the project is due to the close relationship developed between the hospital and the local Aboriginal community through implementing UnitingCare Queensland's first Reconciliation Action Plan.

"We are lucky that we have such a good relationship with our local Aboriginal community," Michelle said.

"At St Stephen's the relationship we have with our local community is very important to us. We are very conscious of not just paying lip service to working with our community but having a real relationship where we consult, listen and act on their views.

"We have been able to build a great relationship with the Butchulla people, from the Scrub Hill area, and work closely with them on a range of issues to help us build partnerships with the local community.

"They know the history of the local area and the issues their community faces. It means we can ask them for advice and they can advise us on what actions we can take to help them and it has helped us build partnerships with the local community

While the management team at St Stephen's Hospital had discussed a possible garden with native plants, it was through their discussions with their local community that the idea really blossomed.

"We had a seed of an idea for the medicinal garden," said Michelle. "When we started talking to our local community, including Norman Barney, Elder for the Butchulla People and landscape architect Stephen Perry , our original idea just grew and grew.

"We were also joined by Tina Raveneau, Community Development Program Officer from the Fraser Coast Regional Council, who has offered valuable input into the project.

"From speaking with Norman, Stephen and Tina, I'll never look at a plant in the same way – their knowledge and passion is inspiring.

"Norman shows you that a plant is not just a plant; each one has its own meaning and purpose. Steve too is so passionate about what he does and in using native plants in the correct way," Michelle said.

Our Plan

Relationships

Healthy relationships in UnitingCare Queensland between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians are vital and essential to reconciliation. Relationships that thrive within the organisation and through the work of all UnitingCare Queensland service groups demonstrate respect, trust, connection and practical understanding of how people work together. Good relationships help us to deliver our quality services with compassion and to provide a voice for a fair and just society.

How will we assess progress?

The extent to which we recognise and support an organisational culture that is actively working toward reconciliation.



Actions	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Continued RAP governance by the Advisory Group on Reconciliation (AGR)		Chair, Advisory Group on Reconciliation
1.1 Oversee the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP (2014 to 2017)	May 2014	"
1.2 Meet three times per year and receive reports from service groups about progress on implementing actions	February, June and October, annually	"
1.3 Publish AGR minutes and RAP products on intranet sites	March, July and November, annually	"
1.4 Update the Executive Leadership Team on progress	March, July and November, annually	"
1.5 Submit an Annual Impact Statement to Reconciliation Australia	September, annually	"
1.6 Prepare an annual report to UnitingCare Queensland	September, annually	"
1.7 Review AGR performance annually, document and implement improvements	June, annually	AGR Chair and members

Actions	Timeline	Responsibility
2. Celebrate National Reconciliation Week	27 May - 3 June, annually	Marketing and Communication Manager, UnitingCare Queensland
2.1 Organise a major event attended by the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Directors	27 May - 3 June, annually	"
2.2 Develop a UnitingCare Queensland CEO Reconciliation Award	May 2015	"
2.3 Distribute information about National Reconciliation Week to local services	April-May, annually	"
2.4 Encourage local services to work together to celebrate National Reconciliation Week	April, annually	"
2.5 Distribute information about the State and National Reconciliation Awards	January, annually	"
2.6 Support staff to prepare nominations for awards	January, annually	"
3. Continue to raise internal awareness of the RAP to build the foundation for achieving reconciliation		Director Strategy, UnitingCare Queensland
3.1 Examine various platforms to host the cultural hub and decide on an option	October 2014	"
3.2 Develop an online cultural hub containing RAP policies, RAP products, AGR minutes, fact sheets, event information and links to cultural and historical information	September 2015	"
3.3 Produce positive news stories which highlight the achievements of the RAP	September, annually	Marketing and Communication Manager, UnitingCare Queensland
3.4 Update annually a cultural calendar for distribution via the intranet/cultural hub	December - January, annually	"
4. Build trust and connection with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, service users, communities and organisations		Service Managers
4.1 Consult with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities as part of service group planning	September, annually	"
4.2 Seek advice from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff advisory groups and local staff as part of planning activities	June, annually	"
4.3 Develop material with culturally sensitive branding for use by services with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients/patients/residents	June 2015	Marketing and Communication Manager, UnitingCare Queensland

Respect

UnitingCare Queensland recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples. To have this reality acknowledged and accepted is at the heart of respect. UnitingCare Queensland will demonstrate listening and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their beliefs and values through a commitment to self determination and learning about knowledge of culture, language and history.

How will we assess progress?

The extent to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who access our services consider that we listen and respect their beliefs, values and needs.



Actions	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Continue to embed practices demonstrating respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culture and traditions to demonstrate our recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples		All Managers
5.1 Update and distribute the Cultural Protocols and where practical follow up to assess reach	March, annually	Project Officer, Strategy Team, UnitingCare Queensland
5.2 Update and distribute the Visit to Country Guide to capture new opportunities including inviting Elders to visit UnitingCare Queensland services	March, annually	"
5.3 Encourage take up by staff teams to use the guide and visit to Country or invite Elders to visit services	March, annually	All Managers
6. Build on existing cultural awareness initiatives through development of a cultural awareness training plan to demonstrate our commitment to ongoing learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures		Chair, HR Sub-Committee
6.1 Provide access to all new staff to an induction presentation outlining UnitingCare Queensland's Reconciliation Action Plan and links to cultural and historical information	December 2014	HR Directors
6.2 Explore extending the reach of the induction presentation to existing staff including via an online platform	June 2015	Chair, HR Sub-Committee
6.3 Review the induction presentation	December 2015	"
6.4 Explore the delivery of face-to-face cultural awareness training by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander facilitator	February 2016	"

Actions	Timeline	Responsibility
6.4.1 Consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff about options for delivering face-to-face cultural awareness training	June 2015	Chair, HR Sub-Committee
6.4.2 Explore options for face-to-face delivery including via an external provider	October 2015	"
6.5 Decide on preferred option	February 2016	"
7. All staff are given the opportunity to observe and celebrate NAIDOC Week	July, annually	HR Managers
7.1 Provide cultural leave for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with their culture and community by participating in local NAIDOC Week committees and NAIDOC Week events	July, annually	"
7.2 Host stalls at NAIDOC week events in Brisbane and in regional areas	July, annually	Marketing and Communication Manager, UnitingCare Queensland
8. Deliver services that respect and meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and that reflect our commitment to listening to and respecting the beliefs, values and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples		Service Managers
8.1 Learn from the experiences of Blue Care's Indigenous Services and promote good ways of working to improve our service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	September, annually	General Manager Indigenous Services, Blue Care
9. Progressively implement the Cultural Capability Checklist across UnitingCare Queensland to monitor and improve our capability and to make our services more culturally appropriate.		Chair, HR Sub-Committee
9.1 Develop a service group specific implementation plan to roll out the Cultural Capability Checklist	June, annually	HR Directors
9.2 Report annually on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of sites that have undertaken the checklist • Anecdotal evidence of the results 	June, annually	"
10. Demonstrate reconciliation themes at UnitingCare Queensland sites to show respect and our commitment to reconciliation through our RAP		Service Managers
10.1 Displays at sites can be chosen from any or all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Aboriginal Australia map • the National Apology • Robert Barton reconciliation artwork • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags • Other ideas 	June 2015	"
10.2 Explore the adoption of reconciliation themes for the new UnitingCare Queensland Brisbane group accommodation	June 2015	Chair, Building Community Task Group



Sometimes, for many different reasons, grandparents have the role of raising their grandchildren and a program currently run by UnitingCare Community called Time for Grandparents, is helping to ensure that grandparents raising Indigenous children stay connected to their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage.

Since 2007 the Time for Grandparents program has supported almost 1 000 Queensland families as grandparents, more and more, take on the challenging role as full-time carers.

Of the families currently participating in the program, 207 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander grandparents are raising their grandchildren and 60 non-Indigenous grandparents are caring for their Indigenous grandchildren.

The program provides participants with invaluable information and referrals, financial assistance for the children to participate in sporting and recreational activities, and overnight “time-out” camps for the whole family.

Senior Indigenous Project Officer, Dulcie Bronsch said that while the camps provided an opportunity for Indigenous children to reconnect with their heritage, they also gave non-Indigenous carers the support and encouragement needed to raise their Indigenous grandchildren.

Dulcie said many of the program’s non-Indigenous grandparents opted to attend the overnight camps to gain a better understanding of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

“Many of the non-Indigenous grandparents have said that they cannot provide the culture their children need or yearn for and are grateful that we can provide the traditional and contemporary cultural program for them,” Dulcie said.

“At one of the camps, a non-Indigenous grandparent was upset that her grandchild’s Aboriginal relatives believed that she should not be raising her Indigenous granddaughter even though it was the result of a Family Court decision.

“Other Indigenous carers attending the camp reassured her that she had made the right decision as they could see the special bond that existed between the two,” Dulcie said.

“The grandmother left the camp feeling reassured and more confident in her ability to parent and now she cannot wait for the next camp.

“It makes such a difference to these families to see the children happy and knowing that they are not being denied of fun and culturally appropriate opportunities,” she said.

Opportunities

Our collective communities will benefit from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce comprised of people who are respected and supported to reach their potential. UnitingCare Queensland is committed to improving work opportunities and work environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to enable them to fully participate within a culturally appropriate workplace.

How will we assess progress?

1. The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed by UnitingCare Queensland
2. The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff undertaking internships, cadetships and traineeships
3. Staff survey results
4. The extent to which UnitingCare Queensland engages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses

Actions	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Promote tools and resources that help service groups to employ, train and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff		Chair, HR Sub-Committee
11.1 Produce tools to support service groups and UnitingCare Queensland to implement the employment model used in the Hervey Bay Multi-Skill Health Worker Program	March 2015	Project Officer, Strategy Team, UnitingCare Queensland
11.2 Make available information and links on intranet sites to assist UnitingCare Queensland and service groups recruit new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff	March 2015	Chair, HR Sub-Committee
11.3 Make scholarship and study assistance information available on intranet sites to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff with further study opportunities	March 2015	"
11.4 Consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff about strategies to recruit, retain, mentor and support the career development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff from entry level through to leadership roles	February, annually	HR Directors
11.5 Learn from the experiences of Blue Care's Indigenous Services and promote good ways of working which recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff	September, annually	General Manager Indigenous Services, Blue Care

Actions	Timeline	Responsibility
11.6 Continue the adoption of processes allowing people to identify as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person	September, annually	HR Directors
11.7 Promote local networks and gatherings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in order to share information and experiences	February, annually	"
12. Investigate opportunities to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses in our supply chain		Director Procurement, UnitingCare Queensland
12.1 Explore membership of the local Indigenous Chamber of Commerce or Supply Nation	February 2015	"
12.2 Produce and distribute a list of Indigenous businesses throughout UnitingCare Queensland	June 2015	"
12.3 Ask current and potential suppliers whether they have a RAP and record results	December 2014	"



Case study

Employment opportunities offered for
Indigenous job seekers on the Fraser Coast



Twenty-two Indigenous job seekers from the Fraser Coast have begun what could be a life-changing opportunity as they embark on completing a three month training program which not only builds skills and knowledge, but also positions them as preferred applicants for roles in Blue Care aged care facilities and the new St Stephen's Hospital currently being built in Hervey Bay.

The program, (St Stephen's Indigenous Health Support Worker Multi-Skilled Program) will provide nationally accredited qualifications with a focus on developing skills in health administration, food services and cleaning in a health care environment.

A member of the project steering committee, Norelle Watson, Indigenous Advisor to one of UnitingCare

Queensland's service groups Blue Care, has been instrumental in getting this program "off the ground".

"A job means more than you can imagine – it's potentially life changing," Norelle said.

"Not only does it bring in an income, but it provides an opportunity to be a role model for the younger generation. The ripples this program creates will be felt throughout the community," she said.

"We originally had 18 places, but after interviewing 22 outstanding candidates, we couldn't say no to any of them. They are an extremely devoted and enthusiastic group of people, who are so eager to find employment. Already I've seen their strength; these are real, salt-of-the-earth people," Norelle said.

"When the candidates were told their application was successful, several of the participants just broke down into tears of happiness.

"The reactions from some of the participants have touched my heart. You can see how much this opportunity means to them and it makes the long lead time getting to this point even more worth while. Finding long term sustainable employment will definitely change their lives," Norelle said.

The project team are also delighted to have an Indigenous Coordinator and Mentor Rod Ogilvie, a Yamatji man from Naanda Country in Western Australia working with participants to support and guide them throughout the program. Rod has extensive experience in Indigenous training and employment and is vital to the project.

"As soon as we met Rod, we knew he was the person for the job," Norelle said.

"He will be there for students every step of the way, encouraging their learning and development. He'll be Big Brother, he'll be Uncle. He will also negotiate with employers and advocate for positions for participants," said Norelle.

Students will be able to put their new skills and knowledge into practice during their week-long work placement at local health care facilities.

"The beauty of this project is that it's beneficial to everyone involved. It's valuable to provide Indigenous job seekers with an opportunity for employment and even more so, it's valuable to be able to place our

students in workplaces that are culturally sensitive, safe and secure," Norelle said

"We are able to confidently offer these opportunities because UnitingCare Queensland understands the value of a diverse workforce and, as part of its Reconciliation Action Plan, has implemented a number of initiatives across the organisation which has created a work place that is respectful and culturally aware," Norelle said. " she said.

The program has also benefited from support from several organisations in the local community.

"Securing funding with Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment and the Federal Departments of Education and Employment, developing and finally commencing this program has been a collaborative effort over the past six months.

"We consulted with Galangoor Duwalami Primary Health Care Service and Kal'ang Respite Care Centre in the initial stages, who endorsed the project from the get-go, as did the Medicare Locals Indigenous Unit. The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs has also supported us along the way.

"My colleagues from across UnitingCare Queensland including UnitingCare Health, UnitingCare Community and Blue Care have worked together in conjunction with the Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay Institute of TAFE to make this happen. The team has been so committed," Norelle said.

The St Stephen's Indigenous Health Support Worker Multi-skilled program is a direct result of the workforce planning strategy put forward by Norelle in response to employment targets made in the UnitingCare Queensland Reconciliation Action Plan and says the benefits will be far-reaching.

"At the heart of all this is reconciliation, and I'm so proud of the real action and commitment we have to doing what we say."

Tracking progress and reporting

Actions	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Report on RAP progress		Director Strategy, UnitingCare Queensland
13.1 Complete and submit to Reconciliation Australia the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire	September, annually	"
13.2 Complete and promote a UnitingCare Queensland RAP Annual Report	September, annually	"

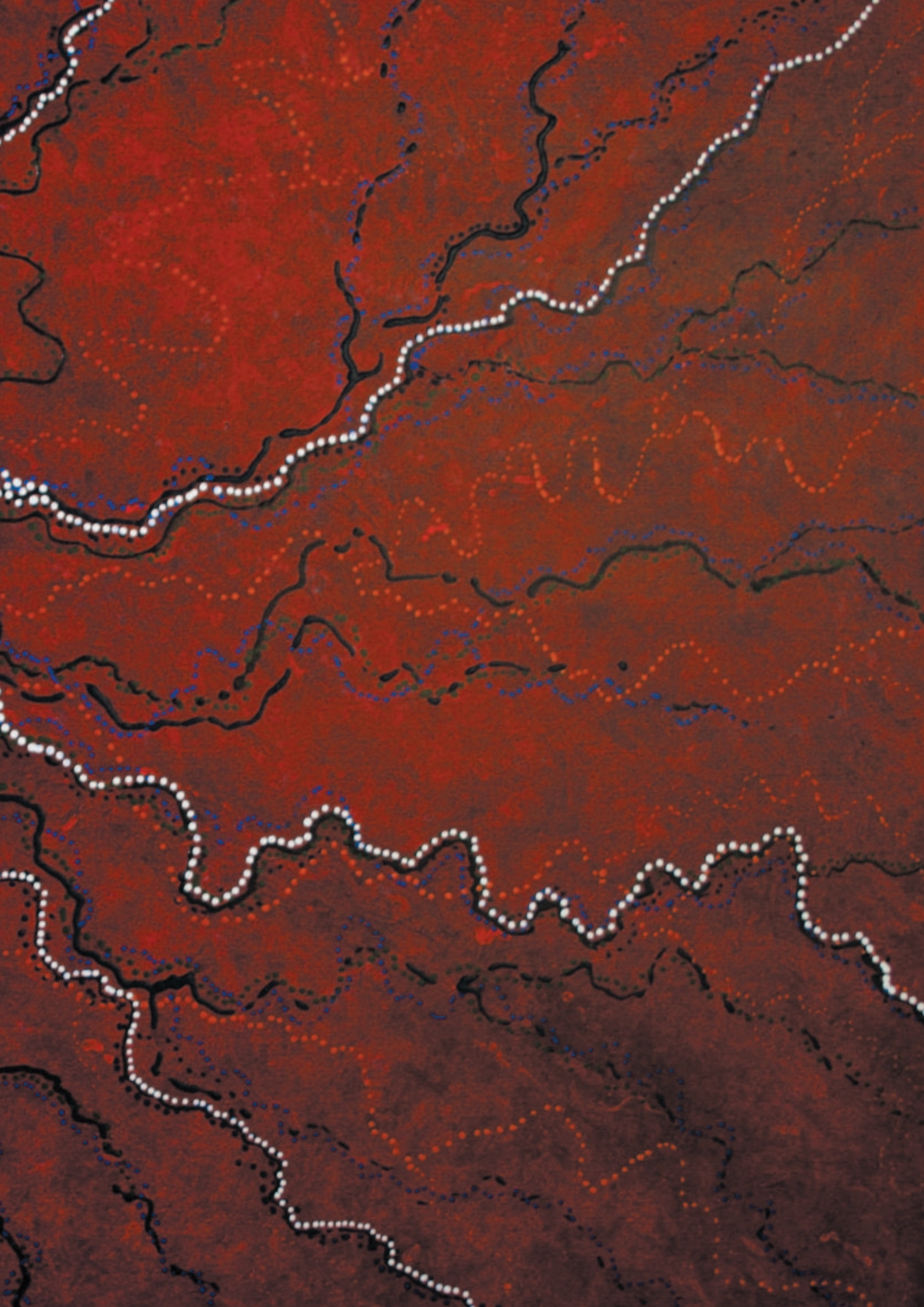




Notes

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Our Values: Compassion • Respect • Justice • Working Together • Leading through Learning

UnitingCare Community • UnitingCare Health • Blue Care